



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065 / TELEPHONE 547-7000

MIKE GABBARD
COUNCILMEMBER • DISTRICT I
CHAIR, PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
PH: (808) 547-7001 • FAX: (808) 550-6917
mgabbard@co.honolulu.hi.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: News Directors
FROM: Mike Gabbard 547-7001 or 371-5188

VOLUNTEER POLICING BILL PASSES FINAL READING

HONOLULU – DECEMBER 3, 2003 – THE HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY passed a measure at its meeting today to establish a volunteer force of citizens to patrol Oahu's neighborhoods keeping an eye out for abandoned and derelict vehicles, and parking violations.

Bill 64, introduced in September by Councilmember Mike Gabbard, garnered support from the Honolulu Police Department, the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers (SHOPO) Oahu Chapter, and members of the public. The bill now goes to the Mayor to be signed into law.

"Property crime and drug abuse are threatening our kama'aina way of life," said Gabbard. "This program will empower our citizens to make a real difference by helping to free up our police officers to concentrate on busting drug dealers, rapists, and murderers. We have nearly 30,000 Neighborhood Security Watch volunteers on Oahu and I know many of them are eager to get more involved."

The program will be administered by the police department which will train volunteers in state and city laws, issuing citations, avoiding confrontations and testifying in court. Volunteers must be Honolulu residents who are U.S. citizens at least age 21, and pass a background check as well as the program's training course. The City & County of Honolulu currently allows limited powers to volunteers to enforce handicapped parking laws. That program will become part of the volunteer policing program.

"When it comes down to it – you can't put a price tag on 'quality of life' and that's what this program is all about," said Gabbard. "I have a lot of faith in HPD and the citizens of Oahu to make this new program an outstanding success in making our communities cleaner and safer."

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